



This community profile is intended to provide insight on the conditions – both strengths and challenges – of a particular neighborhood through a variety of data gathered between 2010-2012\*. Bridges seeks to engage the collective resources of this community and take action to improve conditions for children and families.

The Boynton Beach neighborhood that Bridges targets has approximately 1,632 households and a population of 3,726 residents. In 2010, approximately 11% of the population was 0 to 8 years old (395 children).

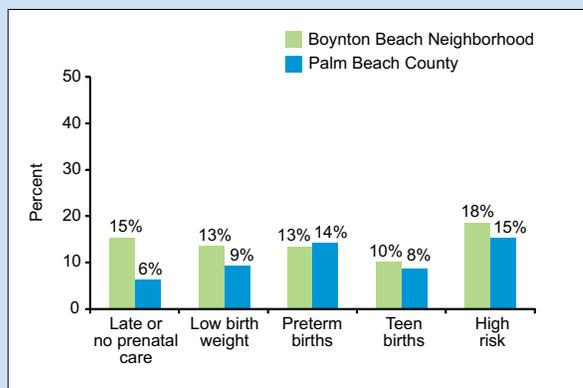
**Census Tract = 61    Population: 3,726    Population 0–8 years: 395**

**The first goal of the Bridges initiative is to increase the number of children born healthy.** Children born in the Boynton Beach neighborhood in 2010 fared worse than children in Palm Beach County on nearly all birth indicators (Figure 8-1). In 2010, 13% of infants were low birth weight, and 13% were born preterm. In addition, 18% of births in the Boynton Beach neighborhood were considered high risk. Approximately 15% of women received late or no prenatal care, and 10% of births were to teen mothers.

The infant mortality rate in the Boynton Beach neighborhood was lower than in Palm Beach County. 4.8 infants died for every 1,000 live births in the neighborhood compared with 5.5 in Palm Beach County.

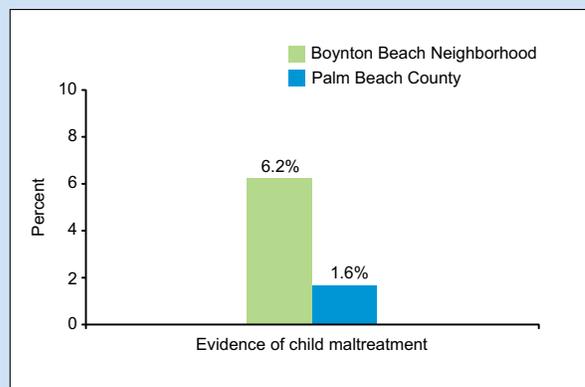
**The second goal of the Bridges initiative is to make sure children are in safe and nurturing environments and remain free from abuse and neglect.** Evidence of child maltreatment was much higher in the Boynton Beach neighborhood than in the county (Figure 8-2). Data provided by the Department of Children and Families of Palm Beach County show that 6.2% of children in the neighborhood had evidence of maltreatment compared with 1.6% of children in Palm Beach County overall.

Figure 8-1. Prenatal Care and Births in the Boynton Beach Neighborhood (2010)



Source: Florida Department of Health

Figure 8-2. Evidence of Child Maltreatment in the Boynton Beach Neighborhood (2010)



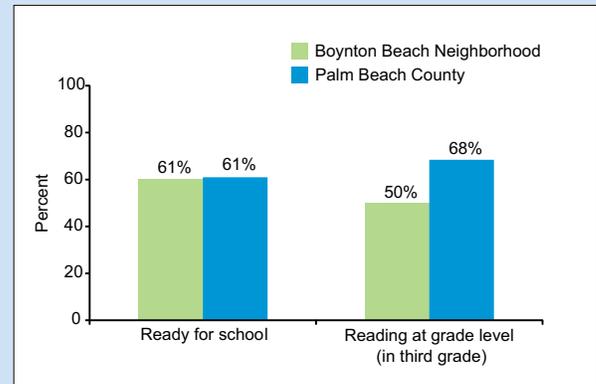
Source: Department of Children and Families in Palm Beach County. Note: Only 60% of children with evidence of maltreatment could be linked to a physical residence and geocoded to the neighborhood level.

\*Information contained in the profile represents a point in time; perceptions and staff insight may not express the views of the entire community.

**The third goal of the Bridges initiative is to increase the number of children who enter kindergarten ready to learn.** In 2010, 61% of children in the Boynton Beach neighborhood were ready for school at kindergarten entry, which is equivalent to Palm Beach County where 61% of children were ready for school when they entered kindergarten (Figure 8-3).

**The fourth goal of the Bridges initiative is to increase the number of children who are proficient readers in third grade.** In 2010, 50% of children in the Boynton Beach neighborhood were reading at grade level in third grade compared with 68% of children in Palm Beach County (Figure 8-3).

Figure 8-3. School Readiness and Third-Grade Reading Skills in the Boynton Beach Neighborhood (2010)



Source: Palm Beach County School District.  
 Note: Measured by the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS) and the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT).

## Boynton Beach Neighborhood: At A Glance

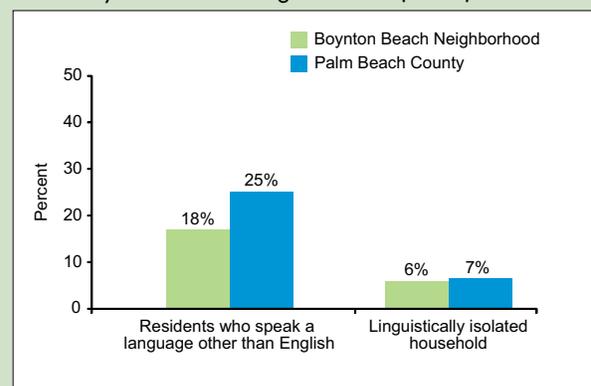
**Race & Ethnicity.** The racial composition in this neighborhood is 68% black and 28% white, according to the 2010 U.S. Census. The majority of residents in this neighborhood are non-Hispanic; just 6% identified their ethnicity as being Hispanic. The majority of individuals served by Bridges at Boynton Beach describe their ethnicity as either Haitian (56%) or African American (35%).

**Language.** Among Boynton Beach neighborhood residents, 18% reported speaking a language other than English at home, and 6% of households are considered linguistically isolated. Linguistically isolated households are those where no one 14 years old or older can speak English fluently.

**Education.** High school graduates accounted for 76% of the population in the Boynton Beach neighborhood compared with 87% in Palm Beach County, which indicates 24% of residents did not complete high school or obtain a GED. Among Boynton Beach neighborhood residents 25 years old or older, 21% completed an associates degree or higher compared with 40% in Palm Beach County.

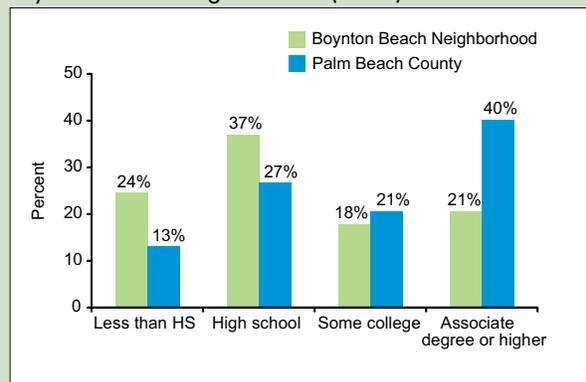
**Housing & Household Composition.** In this neighborhood, 54% of households are owner-occupied and the remaining 46% are renter-occupied. According to census data, 81% of residents report residing in the same household as one year ago (compared with 85% for Palm Beach County). More than half the children (57%) live in single-parent households compared with 37% in Palm Beach County.

Figure 8-4. Language Barriers in Residents and Households in the Boynton Beach Neighborhood (2010)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Figure 8-5. Highest Education Attained by Residents in the Boynton Beach Neighborhood (2010)



Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau.

## Economic Indicators:

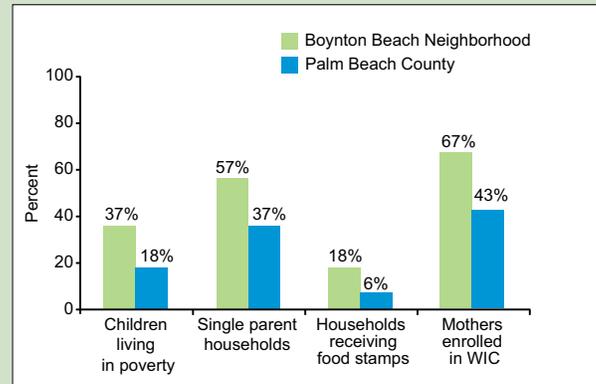
The median household income was \$30,137, compared with \$58,709 in Palm Beach County. The unemployment rate in the neighborhood was 18% compared with 9% in Palm Beach County.

Among children in the Boynton Beach neighborhood, 37% lived below the federal poverty level in 2010 compared with 18% in Palm Beach County. (Figure 8-6).

Households receiving food stamps accounted for 18% of the neighborhood compared with 6% in Palm Beach County.

Births to mothers enrolled in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program was 67% in the Boynton Beach neighborhood and 43% in Palm Beach County. (Figure 8-6).

Figure 8-6. Child and Family Socioeconomics in the Boynton Beach Neighborhood (2010)



Sources: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau; Florida Department of Health.

WIC provides vouchers for supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant and breastfeeding women, as well as to infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk.

## Neighborhood Strengths, Existing Resources, and Partners

**Staff at Bridges identified many resources and supports** as the community's strengths, including the site's location near popular community establishments, such as the Carolyn Sims Center, the Schoolhouse Children's Museum, and the Boynton Beach Library. Boynton Beach City Hall is located within the neighborhood as well, and the government has played a significant role in Bridges endeavors. Several licensed child care providers are nearby, as are two area elementary schools, Poinciana and Galaxy Elementary.

**St John Missionary Baptist Church**, the organization that operates Bridges at Boynton Beach, has a long standing history in the Boynton Beach community, 103 years to be exact. The church has more than 3,000 members, and a weekly attendance between 2,000 and 2,500 people. The Boynton Beach Bridges site is located in a small house that was converted into the Bridges office on a side street (NE 12th Avenue) off of Seacrest Boulevard. Activities also are co-located at St John Missionary Baptist Church, including parent-child activities and immunization services offered by the Palm Beach County Health Department. The office is in a suburban area with residences, churches, and small locally owned businesses. Other agencies also use the Boynton Beach site to meet with families in need (e.g., Healthy Mothers/Healthy Babies, Home Safe, and Families First).



**Bridges staff describe specific strengths that include:**

- **This is a close-knit community.** Most people have lived in this community for a long time and tend to live close to their relatives. Census data show relatively low mobility, with approximately 81% of residents reporting to be in the same household for the most recent year (compared with 85% for Palm Beach County).
- **Residents are willing to work together to improve neighborhood conditions.** This is evidenced by the participation in neighborhood clean-ups facilitated by Habitat for Humanity and Bridges at Boynton Beach. The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) is also heading a neighborhood revitalization initiative and has partnered with Habitat for Humanity to build 21 affordable family homes in the Ocean Breeze West community, located within the Boynton Beach neighborhood. Additionally, Habitat for Humanity offers classes in budgeting, finances, and preparation for homeownership to Bridges families.
- **This community has family-friendly events** periodically that are open to the public including holiday activities, "Movies in the Park," and sporting events at the Ezell Hester Community Park. The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) frequently sponsors family friendly events.
- **Residents regularly attend a local church or faith-based organization,** and churches are willing to collaborate with Bridges in its endeavors. In particular, the number of churches (18) and strong faith are considered core strengths. The Bridges director described the neighborhood as extremely passionate about its faith. Many churches have dedicated and large congregations.

**A strong spirit of collaboration and partnership exists in Boynton Beach.**

Businesses have been supportive to Bridges by offering discounts to families who are Bridges members. Local nonprofit organizations frequently communicate and share resources. As an example, Women's Circle and Bridges co-facilitate monthly meetings and collaborate to offer GED, ESOL and computer classes to Bridges members. Local elementary schools view collaborating with Bridges as important. Local government officials have been supportive of Bridges, announcing services and activities offered at Bridges during their commission meetings.

**The map** (Figure 8-7) shows the census tract area that Bridges at Boynton Beach targets for services as well as the location of the Bridges site. It also includes a one-half-mile area outside the census tract to show potential resources available to families living in the Boynton Beach neighborhood. The services indicated in the map and descriptions below were those identified in a scan of area resources using 211 online registry, accessible registries for licensed child care providers, health, schools, libraries, parks, and locally developed resource guides that were believed to be current at the time the resource list was developed in fall of 2012. This map may not represent all area resources.

**Services and resources exist in the Boynton Beach area these include:**

- Medical care for pregnant women
- Non-medical resources for expectant parents
- Pediatricians/family medical practices
- Licensed child care providers
- Parks/playgrounds/recreational facilities.



There are four social service and nonprofit organizations in the Boynton Beach area shown on the map in light blue (e.g., Community Caring Center, Youth Empowerment Center, Happier Home).

There are two organizations identified that provide health care or medical services in the map area (Florida Family Care and Selva Ganesha, MD - Obstetrics & Gynecology). However, there are many other resources not shown on the map that are clustered farther south surrounding Bethesda Hospital (e.g., Genesis Community Health, Gentle Medicine Associates, and several OB-GYN offices). Bridges at Boynton Beach partners with the community liaison at Bethesda hospital who facilitates workshops for Bridges families, "All about You and your Baby," which covers topics such as breastfeeding, nutrition and infant care.

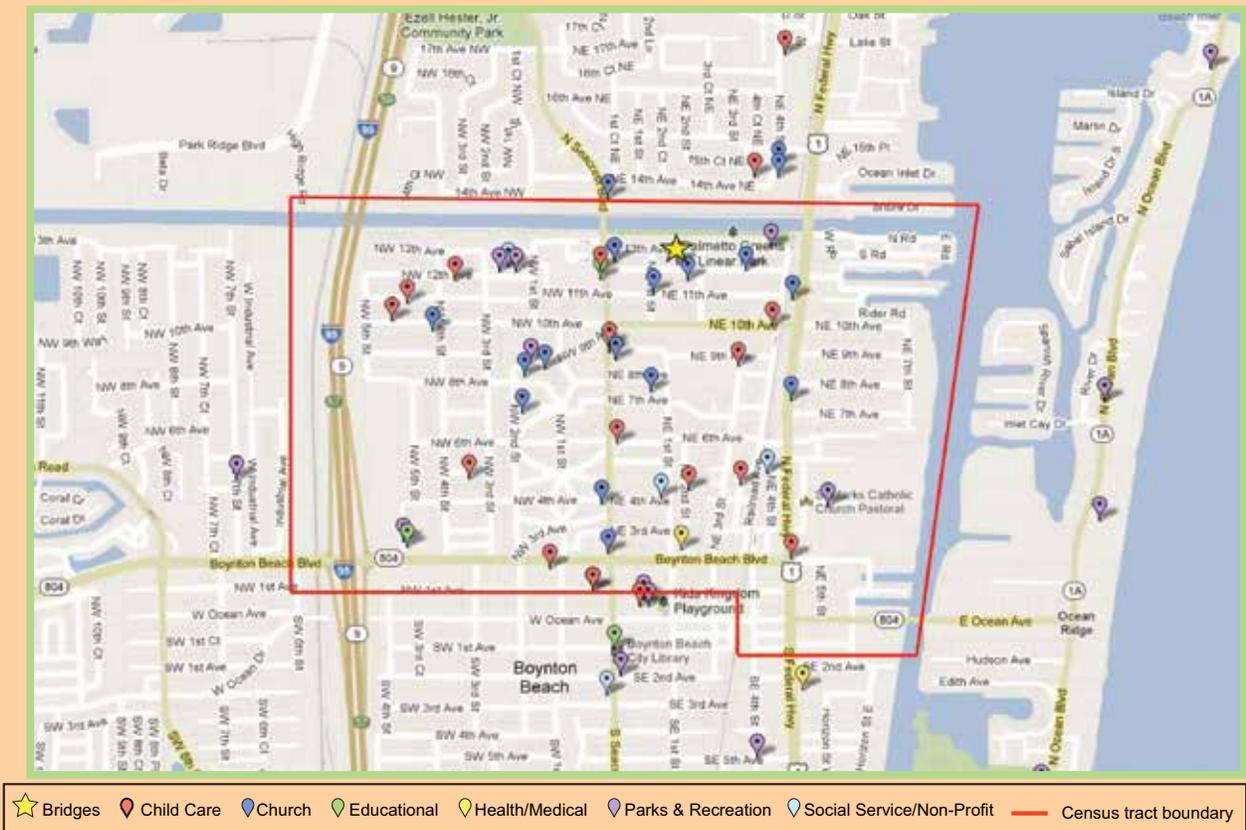
Ten parks and other recreational facilities are shown in the map in purple. Some of the parks and recreation facilities include: Kids Kingdom Playground, Schoolhouse Children's Museum and Learning Center, Carolyn Sims Center, Ezell Hester Community Park, and many neighborhood parks with amenities including playgrounds, athletic courts, sport fields, pavilions, fishing piers, nature, bike trails and more. The neighborhood borders the Intracoastal Waterway

that separates the mainland from the Atlantic Ocean. The Ocean Inlet Park and Ocean Ridge Hammock Park both provide free public beach access.

Four educational resources are shown on the map in green, including Boynton Beach City Library and Galaxy Elementary School. Galaxy Elementary School is currently being rebuilt and modernized and is expected to reopen to students in fall 2013. During the transition, Bridges at Boynton Beach and St John Missionary Baptist Church have hosted School Advisory Committee (SAC) and Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings on-site, so families do not have to travel as far. Bridges at Boynton Beach collaborates with Galaxy Elementary School to offer services and activities to parents of pre-kindergarten and elementary school students.

Bridges at Boynton Beach collaborates with several child care providers, some of them include: Daystar Academy of Excellence, A Firm Foundation, and Treasure Chest Early Learning Center. There are a total of 19 licensed child care providers in the larger area. Of those, 16% participate in the Quality Counts system. Quality Counts is an early care and education improvement and support system that is designed to enhance the quality of child care so that children birth to five years of age are healthy and ready to learn when they enter school.

Figure 8-7. Greater Boynton Beach Neighborhood





**Staff identified several challenges to improving outcomes for children and families in the Boynton Beach neighborhood:**

- Violent crime in the neighborhood is a challenge to building a stronger community for children. In fact, this has prompted the community group, “Boynton United 2 Bury the Violence” to unite residents, churches, non-profits, civic organizations, and others to take action against the violence occurring in Boynton Beach. In 2010, the Boynton Beach Police Department recorded 4 murders, 6 rapes, and 432 aggravated assaults.
- Evidence of child maltreatment in the Boynton Beach neighborhood (6.2%) was nearly four times higher than the rate in Palm Beach County (1.6%).
- Unemployment is high. The unemployment rate in the Boynton Beach neighborhood was 18% in 2010, which is double the unemployment rate in Palm Beach County (9%). This may indicate a substantial proportion of families have difficulty providing for their children’s basic needs.
- Over a third of children in this neighborhood lived below the federal poverty line in 2010.
- Staff report a number of families face language barriers that impacts access to services, or may make them reluctant to use services for which they are eligible.

## Participation Rates: Of the families who visited Boynton Beach Bridges,

- 37% participated in parent-child activities.
- 24% participated in Triple P individual sessions, groups, or seminars.
- 99% participated in navigation activities.
- 26% participated in adult education or capacity-building workshops and activities.

## Service Reach (between June 2011 and December 2012):

- 248 parents of children 0–17 participated in services or activities at Bridges at Boynton Beach.

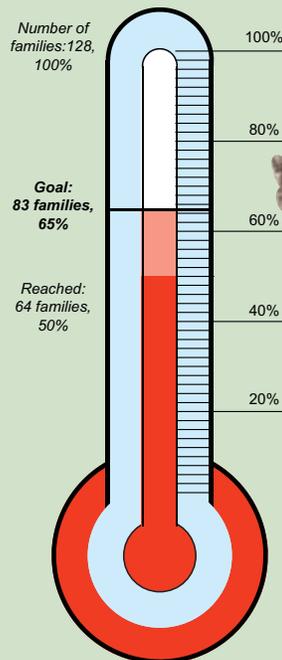
- 246 families participated, and of those families, 67% had children ages 0–5 (n = 165).

—Of those families with children 0–5, 41% resided in a target neighborhood (n = 67).

- 128 families with children age 0–5 lived in the Boynton Beach neighborhood during the 2010 census.

- 64 families with children age 0–5 who live in the Boynton Beach neighborhood participated in activities at Bridges.

—Therefore, we estimate Bridges has been successful in reaching approximately **50%** of the families with children 0-5 in the Boynton Beach neighborhood thus far.



The Bridges model is inspired by the Harlem Children’s Zone model of saturating a neighborhood with information and services to change the trajectories of children and families living there. To achieve this saturation, Bridges hopes to reach 65% of families with young children 0–8 living in the neighborhood to ensure children are born healthy, safe, and ready to succeed in school and life. Boynton Beach Bridges is working hard to reach even more families and promote parents’ ability to support their children’s development and meet the needs of their families.





**Serving Boynton Beach since January 2011.  
Core Activities:**

Bridges at Boynton Beach offers activities to reach the goals of the Bridges initiative, such as outreach, parent support and navigation. Examples of some of these activities include the following:

- Child development through parent-child activities to promote early literacy, social, and motor skills for kindergarten readiness: Helping U Grow Strong (HUGS), and S.T.E.A.M. Power with Schoolhouse Children’s Museum
- Individual and group parent support and education: Triple P; Parents Praising Parents; Healthy Mothers/Healthy Babies child-birth classes; health and nutrition workshops
- Developmental screenings using Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) for children age 0–5 years
- Navigation services - connecting families with needed resources and helpful opportunities: FL ACCESS community partner (help with food, Medicaid, and cash assistance applications), Family Resource Library, car seat safety check/installations, and Business Center (allows members use of a computer, fax, copy, & notary service)
- Adult education and capacity-building workshops: ESOL, GED, and computer classes via Women’s Circle, Financial Fitness
- Community engagement: “Let’s Move Boynton,” “These Hands Won’t Hurt,” Bridges Boutique, and Strong Starts Community Dialogues.



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Bridges is a program of

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**  
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Monday–Friday: 8:30am–7pm  
Evening events, activities, and appointments available when scheduled between 5:30pm–7pm  
Saturdays: 10:00am–2:00pm  
Office hours may vary based on scheduled community events.